

REMARKS

In the final Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1-3, 5-10, 29, and 31 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by FORD et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2005/0289140); allows claims 11-28; and objects to claims 4 and 30 as dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 for the reasons presented below.

By way of the present amendment, Applicants propose canceling claims 4 and 30 without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants propose amending claims 1, 8-11, 23, and 27-29 to improve form. Applicants further propose adding new claims 32-33. No new matter has been added by way of the present amendment. Claims 1-3, 5-29, and 31-33 would be pending upon entry of the present amendment.

Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 11-28 are allowable over the art of record and that claims 4 and 30 would be allowable if rewritten into independent form. By way of the present amendment, Applicants propose amending claim 1 to include the subject matter of claim 4. Thus, Applicants submit that claim 1 is in condition for immediate allowance. Since claims 2, 3, and 5-7 depend from claim 1, Applicants submit that these claims are in condition for immediate allowance for at least the reasons given above with respect to claim 1.

Applicants propose amending independent claims 8-10 to include the allowable subject matter of claim 4. Independent claims 8-10 now recite features similar to (yet

possibly of different scope than) features recited in claim 1. Thus, Applicants submit that claims 8-10 are in condition for immediate allowance.

Applicants further propose amending claim 29 to include the allowable subject matter of claim 30. Thus, Applicants submit that claim 29 is in condition for immediate allowance. Since claim 31 depends from claim 29, Applicants submit that this claim is in condition for immediate allowance for at least the reasons given above with respect to claim 29.

Applicants propose adding new claims 32 and 33. Claim 32 depends from claim 8. Thus, Applicants submit that claim 32 is in condition for immediate allowance for at least the reasons given above with respect to claim 8. Moreover, claim 32 recites a feature similar to 6, which depends from claim 1. Thus, Applicants submit that the addition of claim 32 does not raise new issues or require an additional search of the art.

Claim 33 depends from claim 9. Thus, Applicants submit that claim 33 is in condition for immediate allowance for at least the reasons given above with respect to claim 9. Moreover, claim 33 recites a feature similar to 6, which depends from claim 1. Thus, Applicants submit that the addition of claim 33 does not raise new issues or require an additional search of the art.

Claims 1-3, 5-10, 29, and 31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly anticipated by FORD et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As indicated above, Applicants propose amending independent claims 1 and 8-10 to include the allowable subject matter of claim 4 and amending independent claim 29 to include the allowable subject matter of claim 30. Thus, Applicants submit that claims 1, 8-10, and 29 are in condition for immediate allowance. Applicants further submit that

claims 2, 3, 5-7, and 31 are in condition for immediate allowance based on their dependency from claims 1 and 29.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claims 1-3, 5-10, 29, and 31 are not anticipated by FORD et al.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner's reconsideration of this application, and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Applicants respectfully request that the present amendment be entered because the present amendment places the application in immediate condition for allowance.

While the present application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, should the Examiner find some issue to remain unresolved, or should any new issues arise which could be eliminated through discussions with Applicants' representative, then the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone to expedite prosecution of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1070 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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